

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

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R 101410Z SEP 76

FM AMEMBASSY CAIRO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6925

INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN

AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

S E C R E T CAIRO 12218

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR XF

SUBJ: ARAB LEAGUE OFFICIAL'S COMMENTS ON PROPOSED SUMMIT

1. DEPUTY ARAB LEAGUE SECRETARY GENERAL FOR PALESTINIAN AFFAIRS MUHAMMAD AL-FARRA TOLD POLCOUNS SEPTEMBER 8 THAT HE WAS NOT PLEASED WITH OUTCOME OF ARAB LEAGUE MEETING TO PREPARE SUMMIT ON LEBANON. "HOW COULD I AS A PALESTINIAN ACCEPT NO ACTION FOR AT LEAST ANOTHER SEVEN WEEKS WHEN PALESTINIANS ARE BEING KILLED EVERY DAY?" FARRA CLAIMED TWO MAIN CONSIDERATIONS WHICH RESULTED OCTOBER DATE WERE (A) SEPTEMBER 23 ASSUMPTION OF PRESIDENCY BY SARKIS AND (B) THE EXPRESSED NEED FOR WIDE INTRA-ARAB CONSULTATIONS TO SUBMERGE ARAB DIFFERENCES AND CREATE SOLIDARITY NECESSARY FOR EFFECTIVE AL ACTION ON LEBANON. DURING COUSE OF PRE-SUMMIT CONSULTATIONS, FARRA DID NOT RULE OUT POSSIBILITY OF MINI-SUMMIT BEING HELD PRIOR TO FULL SUMMIT. FARRA HAD NO EXPLANATION FOR EGYPTIAN ACQUIESCENCE IN OCTOBER DATE AND DROPPING OF DEMAND FOR SYRIAN WITHDRAWAL. HE DID SAY THAT FAHMY AND KHADDAM NOW APPEARED ON "VERY FRIENDLY" TERMS.

2. FARRA OBSERVED ON "STRICTLY PERSONAL BASIS" THAT CONFIDENCE OF LEBANON, SYRIAN, JORAN AND PLO MIGHT BE THE "BEST THING"

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THAT COULD HAPPEN IN ORDER TO MOVE PEACE PROCESS FORWARD.

HE FELT THAT FEAR OF ISRAEL ON PART OF INDIVIDUAL CONFRONTATION STATES AND PALESTINIANS HAS TRADITIONALLY BEEN LARGEST SINGLE OBSTACLE TO NEGOTIATIONS WITH ISRAEL. IF CONFEDERATION IS PROPERLY PREPARED AND HAS SUPPORT OF ARAB MASSES IT COULD GIVE ALL OF THESE STATES CONFIDENCE TO NEGOTIATE. FARRA THOUGH THOSE WHO ACCUSE SYRIA OF ONLY BEING INTERESTED IN ESTABLISHING DAMASCUS AS A POWER OF CENTER TO RIVAL CAIRO MAY BE SHORTSIGHTED. SYRIAN STRATEGY MIGHT WELL BE A TWO STAGE ONE; CREATE A STRONG FEDERATION THAT WOULD MAKE DAMASCUS DOMINANT IN MASHRIK AND THEN ATTEMPT NEGOTIATE AGREEMENT WITH ISRAEL.

3. FARRA SAID THAT LIBYA HAD BEEN PERSUADED TO WITHDRAW ITS COMPLAINT ABOUT EGYPTIAN TROOPS CONCENTRATIONS ON ITS BORDERS AFTER RECEIVING "CERTAIN ASSURANCES" AND IN INTEREST OF ARAB SOLIDARITY.
MATTHEWS

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NNN

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